(d) Handlooms constitute a timeless facet of the rich cultural heritage of India. Tradition of weaving by hand is a part of the country's cultural ethos. The strength of Handloom lies in introducing innovative design, which cannot be replicated by the Powerloom Sector. As an economic activity, the handloom sector occupies a place second only to agriculture in providing livelihood to the people. Office of Development Commissioner for Handlooms in the Ministry of Textiles, Government of India has been liberally funding the State Governments for implementing various schemes for handloom weavers to address the felt needs of the handloom weavers to enhance their production, productivity and enhance the income and social economic status of the weavers by providing skill up-gradation, infrastructure and input supply support to them. During the 11th Five Year Plan, the Office of Development Commissioner for Handlooms has been implementing 5 Schemes *viz.* (1) Integrated Handlooms Development Schemes, (2) Handlooms Weavers Comprehensive Welfare Scheme which consisted of Health Insurance Scheme and Mahatma Gandhi Bunkar Bima Yojana, (3) Mill Gate Price Scheme, (4) Marketing and Export Promotion Scheme, and (5) Diversified Handloom Development Scheme.

The State Government is also attaching utmost priority in providing continuous employment and regular wages to the Handloom Weavers by extending financial assistance. The Government of Tamil Nadu is implementing the free distribution scheme as well as uniform cloth for students with huge financial outlay, thereby, the handloom weavers are getting continuous employment and reasonable wages throughout the year. Government of Tamil Nadu is providing free electricity of 100 units by monthly to all the handloom weavers. Further, the Government is also sanctioning Rs. 400 as Old Age Pension (OAP) to the weavers who attain 60 years of age and family pension of Rs. 550 p.m. to the legal heir of the weaver for 10 years in the event of death of weaver before attaining the age of 60 years. Under Comprehensive Welfare Scheme, which consist of Health Insurance and Mahatama Gandhi Bunkar Bima Yojana of the Office of the Development Commissioner (Handlooms) Medical and Insurance benefits are extended to all the weavers as well as ancillary workers both within and outside the cooperative fold.

In view of the several welfare measures taken by Central Government and State Government for the welfare of weavers, there is no urge from the handloom weavers of Tamil Nadu for conversion from handlooms to powerlooms.

No study to assess the impact of global slowdown on textile industry

2300. SHRI R.C. SINGH: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has not conducted any study to assess the impact of global slowdown on Indian textile and clothing industry;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether any data has been prepared and published by Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics, Kolkata; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) and (b) The Government has not conducted any study on the impact of global slowdown on India's textiles and clothing industry. However, a Study apropos was conducted in June, 2009 by the Confederation of Indian Textiles Industry (CITI) in association with the three Textiles Export Promotion Councils for Apparel, Cotton and Synthetic fibres.

(c) and (d) The Directorate General of Commercial and Intelligence and Statistics, Kolkata has published in November, 2009 the latest Foreign Trade Statistics of India (Principal Commodities and Countries) for the period upto June, 2009.

Revival of closed mills in Mumbai

2301. DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any plan to revive and renovate the closed cotton/ textile mills in Mumbai to give employment to millions of workers; and

(b) if so, the steps proposed to be taken for this?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

Special package for revival of NTC mills

2302. DR. E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has special package of revival of NTC mills owned by Government; and

(b) if so, the details of package for different mills and more specially to Kalaiyar Kovil Mills in Sivaganga district, Tamil Nadu?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The Revival Scheme of National Textile Corporation (NTC) approved by the Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR) is self-financing, and funds are generated through sale of surplus land and assets of closed mills. Government has only provided wage support during implementation period of revival scheme to meet out idle wages. However, Kalaiyar Kovil Mills in Sivaganga district, Tamil Nadu does not belong to NTC.

Assistance to workers rendered jobless

2303. SHRI BHAGAT SINGH KOSHYARI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of workers rendered jobless due to the closure of textile mills during the last five years;